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La Liberte.

Edouard Marquis, whose editorials are pro-French, pro-US (except where French interests are threatened), and anti-Soviet, sees a veiled rivalry between the USSR and China over Central Asia. He believes that Soviet economic cooperation in Communist China is merely a "prelude to annexation," and points out that the privileges granted the USSR by China under the 1950 treaty are not permanent.

The writer says that Mao has succeeded in keeping the USSR out of Inner Mongolia, Sinkiang, and Tibet, but he believes that the Kremlin will work patiently to make Communist China a satellite nation.

Although the Soviets and Chinese are united ideologically toward the goal of world revolution, a veiled rivalry exists between the two powers comparable to that between the USSR and Germany in the prewar era.

In 1941, Moscow hoped that the defeat of Japan would favor her own expansion in Mongolia and Sinkiang, and that China would not oppose this annexation. In fact, while Chiang Kai-shek rejected a pact between the USSR and Outer Mongolia in 1936, under pressure from Roosevelt, he signed a new treaty with Stalin in 1945 which declared the independence of the People's Republic of Mongolia. The USSR then formally organized a referendum on Mongolia's separation from China, which took place soon after the Japanese capitulation and produced the results she counted on. However, Chiang Kai-shek did have the satisfaction of seeing an independent Outer Mongolia escape the fate of the Tuva Autonomous Oblast, which has been under Soviet domination since 1944.

But Sino-Soviet rivalry in Mongolia did not end with the 1945 treaty. When the USSR declared war against Japan, the Red armies entered Kalgan and were opposed by the Communists there. The Kremlin voiced no objection to this, but assisted Communist Marshal Choybalsan who wished to extend his domination over Inner Mongolia. And in January 1946, the Republic of Inner Mongolia was proclaimed /sic7.

- 1 -

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At this time, the Chinese Nationalists penetrated Inner Mongolia and were subsequently routed by the Mao Tse-tung forces.

December 1949 found Mao Tse-tung in Moscow and Choybalsan counting on Stalin to make permanent the seizure of Inner Mongolia by Outer Mongolia. Mao, whose visit in Moscow was exceptionally long, firmly stood his ground and only reluctantly consented to recognize the independence of Outer Mongolia.

The thorny Mongolian question was one of the reasons for Mao's prolonged visit, and the following will indicate how bitter the fight must have been. Marshal Choybalsan, (who, incidentally, did not go to Moscow for Stalin's 70th birthday celebration) resigned as Outer Mongolia's Minister of War and Foreign Affairs in protest over an agreement between Stalin and Mao Tse-tung to keep Inner Mongolia within the People's Republic of China. Choybalsan had expected that Moscow would reward him for his many years of faithful service.

But the rivalry between these two great Communists over Sinkiang (Chinese Turkestan) was even more acute. Chinese, Russian, and Eastern Turkestan, form a natural geographic and ethnic unity.

When she first conquered the territory (which today comprise the five Central Asiatic republics of Kazakh SSR, Kirgiz SSR, Tadzhik SSR, Uzbek SSR, and Turkmen SSR), Russia had no intention of keeping this important crossroads and ancient caravan route between the East and West. However, in the second half of the 19th Century, the continual political and economic activity by the Russians over the Chinese border finally bore fruit, and in 1871, Russian troops occupied the Ili region northwest of Sinkiang. The Congress of Berlin forced the Russians to leave, and in 1907, Russia abandoned the idea of military expansion, since World War I was approaching and her troops would be required in the West.

During the period which followed, the governors of Sinkiang were under Chinese and Soviet domination, until 1944 when the Republic of Eastern Turkestan was proclaimed. With the approval of the USSR, Chiang Kai-shek then appointed Chang Chih-chung, one of his best generals, as governor of this province. Later, Chang joined forces with Mao Tse-tung.

In October 1949, Mao's troops entered Urumchi, the capital of Sinkiang, and since then the General [presumably Mao] has consolidated his position in that province. The Kremlin seems to have permitted the Chinese Communists to eliminate the USSR from Eastern Turkestan.

At the beginning of 1949, Chiang Kai-shek tried to bring the Soviets to his side by offering them economic concessions in Sinkiang. Since January 1950, two Sino-Soviet companies have been exploiting oil and various metals found in Sinkiang Province. But Sinkiang is not independent like Outer Mongolia. The USSR is interested in receiving the benefits resulting from exploitation, and Soviet technicians will develop the country's resources in return for half the total production. This is the kind of generosity which would be denounced as the vilest form of "economic imperialism," if practiced by any Western power. The present situation could be called an economic prelude to annexation.

Mao Tse-tung has succeeded in keeping the USSR out of Inner Mongolia, Sinkiang, and Tibet, and no other great power can presently mix in the territorial problems of Central Asia.

However, Stalin and Mao Tse-tung will depend on each other for a long time to come, and Moscow still disposes of important political and economic securities in China. But all the privileges contained in the Sino-Soviet Treaty of 14 February 1950 are subject to a time limit and differ in form from the rights which other powers previously knew how to obtain from China by war or coercion.

- 2 -

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On the other hand, the Kremlin will work patiently to eradicate the "personality" of Communist China and bring her to the ranks of the satellite states. -- Edouard Marquis

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- 3 -

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